FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE APRIL 24, 2008

CONTACT: MARILYN WILSON 615.507.6450 (OFFICE) 615.969.2619 (MOBILE)

TENN. HOSPITALS, CLINICS TO GET \$4.4 MILLION IN U.S. GRANTS HARDEMAN COUNTY TO RECEIVE \$750,000 TO CREATE SATELLITE HEALTH CENTER

NASHVILLE – Tennessee hospitals and clinics will receive \$4.4 million in federal grants to help improve access to primary medical care for TennCare members in an effort to avoid unnecessary emergency room visits. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services awarded Tennessee the fourth highest grant amount out of \$50 million shared among 20 state Medicaid programs. The grants will be administered by the TennCare program.

The Hardeman County Community Health Center and Haywood Park Community Hospital project will receive \$750,000 over two years to create a satellite primary care clinic at the community hospital. The partnership will provide TennCare members primary medical care at the near-by new health center satellite when patients seek non-emergency services at the hospital's emergency department.

"TennCare is excited to be able to relay these dollars directly to local communities," said Dr. Wendy Long, TennCare's chief medical officer. "It will allow clinics and hospital emergency rooms to provide appropriate medical access points to our members by treating patients in the setting that best meets their on-going health needs."

The new clinic will be open four day a week during hours when primary care provider offices are typically closed. The health clinic can also serve as a medical home for TennCare members to receive on-going primary health care or assist members in establishing a medical home with another primary care provider.

"Every patient needs an ongoing relationship with a primary care provider, and these funds will support that concept," said Long. "An emergency room is simply not the right place to treat chronic health conditions or non-urgent health problems."

Two more regional grant projects also received funding. Nashville Medical Home Connection, a partnership between Nashville's United Neighborhood Health Services and nine area hospitals, will receive \$1,354,124; and \$2,368,116 will go to support an initiative with Volunteer State Health Plan, Erlanger Health System and its two federally qualified health centers.

TennCare is Tennessee's managed-care Medicaid program, serving approximately 1.2 million low-income children, pregnant women and disabled Tennesseans, with an annual budget of \$7 billion.

###

310 Great Circle Road Nashville, Tennessee 37243 615.507.6000